

# THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

## INSIDE

'New winds in U.S. class struggle kindle interest in Cuban Revolution'  
California event promotes book by Chinese Cuban generals

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VOL. 71/NO. 20

MAY 21, 2007

## Venezuela gov't takes control of oil fields in Orinoco belt

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

May 8—At midnight on May Day, thousands of oil workers in Venezuela's Orinoco River belt celebrated as the Venezuelan government took over operational control of projects in the area. U.S. oil companies ExxonMobil and Chevron, as well as British Petroleum, France's Total, and Norway's Statoil, all complied with a February 26 decree by Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez giving the state oil company PDVSA at least a 60 percent share in operations there, effective May 1.

Texas-based ConocoPhillips, which has the largest holdings in the Orinoco belt of any foreign investors, has refused to sign an agreement giving PDVSA control of its shares there. "If this company, ConocoPhillips, or any other company does not accept the terms. . . they will have to leave the country," said Venezuela's oil minister Rafael Ramírez May 6.

Deposits in the Orinoco River basin consist of heavy crude oil, whose extraction and upgrading requires greater capital investments and technical expertise than conventional petroleum. The area holds the world's single largest known oil deposit, valued at more than \$30 billion. Foreign companies have invested more than \$17 billion in the projects since they began operations there in the 1990s, when Venezuela's state-owned oil industry was opened to private investment.

Negotiations between the Venezuelan government and foreign oil

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## May Day actions show working class stronger in U.S.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

On May Day nearly 400,000 people poured into the streets of cities and towns across the United States to demand legal status for undocumented immigrants. They protested the stepped-up raids and deportations by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police.

The geographic spread, size, and

### NEWS ANALYSIS

proletarian composition of these actions—despite concerted efforts by capitalist politicians, media, religious leaders, and other ruling-class forces to undercut them—were a measure of how the working class has gained in strength and has been politicized through the integration of millions of immigrants into its ranks, especially those from Mexico and Central America.

These working-class demonstrations drew on the political impact of May Day 2006, when 2 million people mobilized to press for the legalization of all immigrants, with many skipping work that day—the first nationwide political strike in U.S. history.

The big-business media, however, chose to downplay this year's marches and rallies. Typical headlines were "Immigration rights rallies smaller than last year" and "Raid fears kept many home."

But what was really newsworthy about May Day 2007? For the second year in a row, workers took to the streets in substantial numbers nationwide. As the

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## Outrage spreads over L.A. cop riot

Protest called in Los Angeles May 17  
Brutal attack on May Day rally backfires



With batons and rubber bullets, Los Angeles police attacked protesters and journalists at MacArthur Park during May Day action demanding the legalization of immigrants.

BY WENDY LYONS

LOS ANGELES, May 9—The brutal attack by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) on thousands of people peacefully protesting at MacArthur Park here on May Day for legalization of undocumented immigrants has hit a nerve.

A number of immigrant rights organizations have called a protest demonstration, called "March for Justice," starting at the Immanuel Presbyterian Church on May 17 at 5:30 p.m. and ending with a rally at MacArthur Park.

At a packed public hearing attended by 200 at the LAPD headquarters yesterday, more than 20 of those who testified called

for the firing of Police Chief William Bratton.

"This is a total abuse by police, an injustice against workers who are looking for dignity and the right to work," Francisco Cabrera told the *Militant*. Cabrera works in the shipping department of the garment factory American Apparel, which employs some 4,000 workers. "They even attacked children and journalists. We have to continue to defend the right of everyone to work. Stop the raids!"

Hundreds of thousands of workers, like Cabrera, watched on TV the spectacle of cops in riot gear firing tear gas, swing-

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### Celebrate the life and political contributions of Harry Ring, a communist militant for 71 years

Saturday, May 19



Brian Shanon

**Harry Ring at *Militant*, 1968.** Ring was on paper's staff from 1952 to 1989 and served as its editor and Southwest bureau chief.

en and the Cuban Revolution; **Miguel Pendás**, author of *Chicano Liberation and Socialism*; **Michael Ortega**, Young Socialists; **Steve Penner**, international Print Project volunteer. **James Harris** and **Joel Britton** will chair the program, which will be followed by a buffet and refreshments. Donation \$10. For more information call: (323) 233-9372 or (415) 584-2135

**New York Reception 2 p.m.; Program: 3 p.m.**

For location see [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)

**Speakers:** **Jack Barnes**, SWP National Secretary; **Ben O'Shaughnessy**, organizer, Young Socialists National Steering Committee; **Olga Rodríguez**, editor of *Politics of Chicano Liberation*; **Arthur Hughes**, former *Militant* staff member. **Mary-Alice Waters**, editor of *New International*, and **Argiris Malapanis**, editor of the *Militant*, will chair the program, which will be followed by dinner. Donation \$10. For more information call: (212) 629-6649 or (973) 481-0077

Messages can be sent to: [laswp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:laswp@sbcglobal.net) \* Sponsors: SWP and Young Socialists

## Third Swift worker in Iowa convicted for 'identity theft'

BY JOE SWANSON

DES MOINES, Iowa—On May 1, at the end of a two-day trial, Norma González Hernández, 29, a worker at the Swift meat-packing plant in nearby Marshalltown, was found guilty of felony charges of "identity theft" in a federal court here. The jury was out an hour before returning the verdict.

Like her coworkers Lorena Andrade Rodríguez and Eloisa Núñez Galena, found guilty on similar charges in the last

two months, González faces a possible jail sentence, followed by deportation to Mexico. Sentencing hearings have not yet been set.

Like Andrade and Núñez, González did not have a jury of her peers. Only one juror in the initial pool of 30 was a Latino, a former Swift worker. Under question-

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Chicago bus driver won't drive cops, joins May 1 rally 4

Cuban authorities foil attempted hijacking 6

## On to surpassing 'Militant' sub goal!

BY RÓGER CALERO

May 9—More than 260 people subscribed to the *Militant* last week, building on the momentum of the circulation campaign from the May Day actions.

"We had a literature table at the Cinco de Mayo celebration in St. Paul, where we sold 14 subscriptions, 61 copies of the

Continued on page 4

# Washington plans military intervention in Sudan

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Washington and London have threatened new sanctions against Sudan if Khartoum refuses to allow deployment of a 20,000-strong United Nations/African Union “peace-keeping” force into the country’s Darfur region. U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said April 18 that the Sudanese government must act to accept the ultimatum within weeks.

Leading Democrats and other liberal backers of the “Save Darfur Campaign” said Bush should not wait any longer to impose a range of sanctions on Sudan.

Washington’s campaign against the Sudanese government goes back to the Clinton administration as part of pressuring Khartoum to get in line with Washington’s “war on terror.”

On April 23 Washington introduced a resolution at the UN Security Council calling for deployment of the UN/AU force to Darfur. There are already 5,000–7,000 AU troops in Darfur and another 10,000–12,000 UN troops in southern Sudan.

Washington and London have taken advantage of Khartoum’s brutal repression of non-Arabic-speaking peoples and non-Muslims among Darfur’s population to rationalize the imperialist-led intervention. According to UN figures, some 300,000 people have been killed and 2 million displaced since a revolt led by the Sudanese Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement began in the region in 2003. The peoples of Darfur face widespread discrimination.

Among the sanctions being considered is an arms embargo, and expanding the list of individuals from the government and pro-government militia groups called “janjaweed” that have been placed under travel and financial bans. President George Bush said the U.S. Treasury Department could



A protest greets arrival of U.S. diplomat in Khartoum, capital of Sudan, Aug. 26, 2006.

Reuters/Mohamed Nureldin Abdallah

bar business transactions between companies in the United States and Sudan.

The White House is also considering establishing a “no-fly zone” blocking Sudanese military flights over Darfur. A “confidential” UN report claimed Khartoum has flown arms and heavy military

equipment into Darfur in violation of Security Council resolutions, and has disguised its aircraft with UN markings.

Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Joseph Biden said he had little hope the Sudanese government would keep its promises. “Instead of more threats, we

need to act, now,” he said.

During the 1991 U.S.-led war on Iraq the Sudanese government sided with Baghdad and voted at the UN to condemn Israeli aggression against the Palestinians. It had close ties with Libya, then labeled a “terrorist” state by Washington.

U.S. deputy secretary of state John Negroponte, on an African tour, urged Libyan president Muammar Gaddafi to support the deployment of troops to Darfur, Reuters reported April 18.

In 1993 the Clinton administration declared Sudan a “terrorist state,” claiming Khartoum allowed Palestinian and Lebanese guerrillas to train on its soil.

Following the 1998 car bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, Washington ordered military attacks in which dozens of cruise missiles struck an industrial area in Khartoum. A supposed “chemical weapons” factory destroyed by the missiles was later proven to be a pharmaceutical plant.

## U.S.-backed regime in Somalia under fire

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, May 3—The United Nations Security Council asked UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon April 30 to draw up “contingency” plans for UN military intervention in Somalia. African Union troops from Uganda began patrolling Mogadishu, Somalia’s capital, the next day.

Ali Mohammed Gedi, prime minister of Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government (TFG), claimed the forces of the Somalia Islamic Courts Council (SICC) have been defeated. The SICC was ousted from power in December following a military invasion led by Ethiopian troops along with U.S. Special Forces.

But SICC leaders issued a statement

from Eritrea April 30 calling for continued resistance to the TFG and all foreign troops. Washington has accused the SICC of ties to al-Qaeda.

Britain’s UN ambassador Emrys Jones Parry, who is the UN Security Council president, attempted to put a democratic face on the UN intervention, saying no UN forces would go to Somalia unless there was a “sufficient peace to keep,” according to Reuters.

But Ban suggested the opposite view in a recent report, saying if the situation did not improve a “coalition of the willing”—a term the U.S. government coined around the 2003 invasion of Iraq—with a strong military capability should be considered.

So far only the government of Uganda has provided 1,500 troops for the projected 8,000-strong African Union force. Its troops met stiff resistance upon arrival in Mogadishu in March and had until recently remained stationed near the airport.

The government of Mozambique announced May 2 that it would not send troops to Somalia. Teofilo João, a top official of the country’s defense ministry, said his government had not been adequately briefed about the situation.

“Is it a peace keeping mission or a peace imposition mission?” he asked.

The U.S.- and Ethiopia-backed TFG is trying to cobble together a stable regime by appointing clan leaders to the government. President Abdullahi Yusuf named Mohamed Dheere, a leader of the Hawiye clan, as mayor of Mogadishu, the Associated Press reported May 2. Dheere has cooperated with the CIA in capturing al-Qaeda operatives in the capital, AP said. Prior to Dheere’s appointment, Hawiye elders had said that, while they did not necessarily support the SICC, they had no reason to aid the current regime as long as it did not share power.

Dheere and other clan leaders now being appointed to government positions were dubbed “warlords” by Washington leading up to the 1993–94 U.S. military intervention in Somalia by the Clinton administration. Washington failed to establish a stable regime then and withdrew its troops.

A 2004 agreement among clan leaders to form a new interim government, backed by Washington and other imperialist powers, fell apart two years later after a CIA covert operation to arm leaders of various clans against “Islamist” forces was exposed.

# THE MILITANT

## ‘It is trustworthy, doesn’t exaggerate’

*“The ‘Militant’ is international and relevant to people all over the world, from South Africa to China. It puts the working class at the center and gives no credit to (never glorifies) the ruling class. It is trustworthy and it doesn’t exaggerate as other papers may do.”*

—Sebastian Dahlstrand  
Stockholm, Sweden



Sebastian Dahlstrand, 18, a student at Kärrtorp high school in Stockholm.

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Argiris Malapanis

Washington correspondent: Sam Manuel

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Martín Koppel, Olympia Newton, Paul Pederson, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams, and Rebecca Williamson

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Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

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# Maoris in New Zealand fight to reclaim land

BY TERRY COGGAN

WHANGAPE, New Zealand—Pressing their claims for the return of ancestral lands, members of two Maori tribes are occupying two sites in the Far North of New Zealand.

"Whakakoro is the sacred *maunga* [mountain] of our ancestors that has always watched over our *hapu* [sub-tribe] as we practice our traditional customs like gathering seafood, but greedy land-grabbers think it is just a commodity," said Richard Murray. He is a spokesperson for the Ngati Haua hapu who began their most recent occupation at Whakakoro January 16. About 15 people have established themselves in the former homestead on the land. A Maori sovereignty flag flies on top of the house.

Murray and other hapu members spoke to *Militant* reporters during an April 28 visit to the site, a 2,200-acre block of land bounded by the Whangape Harbour on one side and the Tasman Sea on the other. Murray pointed to the spot outside the gate where they had

staged an occupation in 1992, when a family that had farmed the land for three generations sold it to a property speculator. Since then, Whakakoro has passed through the hands of two further owners. Their schemes of subdividing it and making huge profits from its sale have stalled in the face of Ngati Haua opposition. At present, the land, which last sold for NZ \$10 million (NZ \$1 = US 73 cents), is being put up for tender by financial institutions that hold mortgages over it.

Ngati Haua have lodged a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal, a government body set up to investigate Maori land grievances, more than 10 years ago. "Our immediate aim is to stop the mortgagee sale, but we are prepared to go down any path to get our land back," said Murray. "We have even discussed buying it back, but not at these wildly inflated prices which put it beyond our reach."

A little further north, several members of the Ngati Kahu iwi (tribe) continue to occupy a farmhouse on



Militant/Terry Coggan

Members of Ngati Haua at farmhouse they are occupying in Whakakoro, New Zealand, April 28. The banner means, "Maoritanga [Maori culture] established in Aotearoa [Maori for New Zealand] 950 B.C.," before Capt. James Cook, first European to arrive there.

the state-owned Rangiputa Station. In February 80 Maori occupied the land, over which Ngati Kahu has long-standing claims, when the government put it on the market. On February 23 several hundred people marched through the nearby town of Kaitaia to protest the planned sale. At the same time, Hauraki Maori occupied the Whenuakite block in the Coromandel peninsula that was also under threat of sale by the government (see April 2 *Militant*).

In March, in an attempt to defuse the situation, the government announced

it would defer the sale of land at Rangiputa and Whenuakite for a year. "We don't want to just wait around," Mallory Hetaraka told the *Militant* at the Rangiputa site. "We don't want their money. We don't want compensation. We just want our land back."

For more information on the occupation at Whakakoro, or to send a message to the occupiers, visit [www.whangape.co.nz](http://www.whangape.co.nz).

Baskaran Appu and Bob Aiken contributed to this article.

## U.S. military aided Tokyo in its sex slavery at end of World War II

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

April 29—As U.S. troops poured into Japan to occupy that country at the end of World War II, Japanese and U.S. authorities cooperated in rapidly putting in place brothels that forced Japanese women into prostitution for U.S. soldiers. A recent review by Associated Press of some historical documents and records, many from Japan, provides new details about this operation.

A similar system had previously been put in place by the Japanese government in which some 200,000 women, mostly Koreans and Chinese, were coerced into being sex slaves for Japanese troops in the 1930s and into the mid-1940s. This operation, with the addition of many more women from Japan, was now put at the disposal of U.S. occupation forces.

In August 1945, as Tokyo was surrendering to Washington and its allies, "police officials and Tokyo businessmen established a network of brothels under the auspices of the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA), which operated with government funds," stated an April 25 dispatch by Associated Press.

Many young women ended up in these brothels after answering job ads appealing for "Women of the New Japan," wrote Seiichi Kaburagi, chief of public relations for the RAA, in his memoirs.

"Natsue Takita, a 19-year-old Komachi worker whose relatives had been killed in the war, responded to an ad seeking an office worker," AP said. "She was told the only positions available were for comfort women and was persuaded to accept the offer." A few days after the brothel started operations, she killed herself, jumping in front of a train, according to Kaburagi's memoirs.

By the end of 1945, there were 350,000 U.S. troops occupying Japan. RAA at that time employed 70,000 sex slaves. Private brothels operating outside those run by the government boosted this figure even higher.

In March 1946 more than a quarter

of all U.S. GIs occupying Japan had a sexually transmitted disease, noted Toshiyuki Tanaka, a history professor at the Hiroshima Peace Institute. In response to this fact and in an effort to counter adverse publicity about the U.S. occupying forces there, Gen. Douglas MacArthur announced on March 25 of that year that all brothels would now be off limits to U.S. soldiers in Japan.

A nonbinding resolution currently being circulated in the U.S. House

of Representatives calls on Tokyo to apologize for the role played by the Japanese armed forces in coercing women into sexual slavery. The resolution, however, fails to mention the U.S. military's responsibility in aiding and abetting sex slavery for a time.

In another development, Japan's highest court on April 27 rejected compensation claims filed by former sex slaves. In its ruling the court did admit that two of the plaintiffs, Chinese girls who were 13 and 15 at the time, were

kidnapped by Japanese soldiers in Shanxi Province, China, in 1942 and forced to work as sex slaves.

The court also rejected compensation for Chinese men forced to work at no pay at a hydroelectric plant in 1944. According to Japanese government data reported in the April 28 *New York Times*, "about 38,935 Chinese men were forcibly brought to Japan, most of them after March 1944. They were made to work in 135 sites for 35 companies."

## Uproar in Canada against torture in Afghanistan

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

TORONTO, May 3—Ottawa's participation in the imperialist war in Afghanistan dominated discussion in the Canadian parliament last week, as the Conservative minority government sought to defend itself against opposition attacks. An article in the April 23 *Globe and Mail* provoked the furor in reporting that Afghan prisoners captured by Canadian troops had been abused and tortured after being handed over to the custody of Afghan government forces.

In interviewing 30 men recently captured in Kandahar, *Globe* reporters found that "Afghans detained by Canadian soldiers and sent to Kandahar's notorious jails say they were beaten, whipped, starved, frozen, choked, and subjected to electric shocks during interrogation."

Canadian forces regularly hold detainees for a few days of questioning at Kandahar Air Field, and then give them to the National Directorate of Security, Afghanistan's intelligence police.

Mahmad Gul, 33, an impoverished farmer, said he was interrogated for three days in May 2006, without any meals, at Zhari District Centre, a small town west of Kandahar. Gul says his "tormentors were the Afghan police, but the Canadian soldiers who visited him between beatings had surely heard his screams."

Defense Minister Gordon O'Connor's has made conflicting statements on whether the International Committee of the Red Cross was monitoring abuse of detainees by Afghan security forces, and when the Canadian government learned of the allegations of torture. These statements have led to calls for his resignation coming from both opposition parties, as well as the editors of the *Globe and Mail*—a newspaper that speaks for an influential section of the ruling class in Canada.

An editorial in the April 27 *Globe*

expressed concern that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's refusal to force O'Connor to resign is "undermining confidence in this country's important mission in Afghanistan... and in the Conservative government."

On April 24 the House of Commons defeated 150-134 a non-binding resolution introduced by the Liberals to serve notice to other NATO nations that it intends to withdraw the 2,500 Canadian troops from southern Afghanistan by 2009. The Liberals, who ran the government when Canadian troops were first sent to Afghanistan, left the door open for Ottawa to assume other military tasks in Afghanistan in 2009, after the current commitment of troops ends.

New Democratic Party members of parliament say they voted against the Liberal resolution because they are for immediate withdrawal of Canadian troops from Afghanistan.

## CALENDAR

### MARCH FOR JUSTICE

Legalization now!  
Stop raids and deportations!  
Protest May Day cop attack!

Thursday, May 17, 5:30 p.m.

Meet at  
Immanuel Presbyterian Church  
3300 Wilshire Blvd.  
March to MacArthur Park

Los Angeles

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## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### SWEDEN Stockholm

Why Do the Tensions Around Russia Increase? Speaker: Dag Tirsén, food worker and member of the Communist League. Fri., May 18, 7 p.m. Bildhuggargatan 17, Johanneshov. Tel: 08 316933

# Chicago bus driver won't drive cops, joins May 1 march

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel.: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

## YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

BY EREK SLATER

CHICAGO, May 6—With signs saying, "No more raids and deportations! Troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan," Young Socialists marched alongside more than 150,000 people on May Day here demanding unconditional legalization for all undocumented immigrants.

Thousands of high school and college students also chose to miss school and participate in the demonstration.

This reporter, a bus driver for the Chicago Transit Authority, was among the protesters.

When I showed up at work the morning of May Day to tell my coworkers I would be marching that day, the bosses told me I was assigned to drive a "police charter" transporting cops to the May Day action. I was also told the cops would use the bus to take handcuffed demonstrators to prison, "if needed." Supervisors threatened a month's suspension if I did not accept the assignment.

I refused, telling my coworkers that I used to live in La Villita in Chicago where the police raided our shopping mall on April 25 in military style, with bulletproof vests and machine guns. Many of my African American coworkers related stories of police intimidation and harassment on Chicago's south side. Together, we told the bosses I would be

marching, not helping to drive a "paddy wagon" for the cops.

In the end, the bosses backed down, giving me an unpaid day off to march.

After May Day, many fellow workers said they were glad I marched, with one noting that in the future all of us should refuse to drive busses transporting cops assigned to bust workers' actions.

At the May Day rally, Young Socialists got a chance to speak with many youth who expressed the determination of millions in the U.S. working class to fight for better working and living conditions.

"People come from other countries to work," Elizabeth Hernández, a student at Kelvyn Park High School, told us. "We don't deserve to be treated like animals."

"We all should have the same rights," said Santos Rodríguez, a young carpet installer. "We will not be humiliated."

Many youth marched with shirts and banners depicting photos of Ernesto Che Guevara, the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban Revolution. Young Socialists took the opportunity to explain what many did not know: that Che helped lead millions of Cuban workers and farmers to take power into their own hands, over-



Militant/Ernest Mailhot

From left: young socialists Jorge Ortiz, Erek Slater, and Christian Castro march as part of the 150,000-strong mobilization in Chicago on May Day.

throw capitalism, and join the worldwide struggle to build a society based on human solidarity and social equality. We said the YS defends the Cuban Revolution because it shows that a socialist revolution is possible and necessary.

Today, Young Socialists marched in solidarity with a group of strikers from Fox Valley Forge in Aurora, Illinois. The strikers participated in the annual Cinco de Mayo rally in Aurora. Dozens of observers greeted the contingent of

strikers and their supporters. The Fox Valley Forge workers have been on strike for two months demanding better conditions on the job.

Through these actions, we all got a boost of confidence in continuing the struggle to demand: Stop the raids and deportations! Legalize all undocumented immigrants now!

Christian Castro contributed to this article.

## Third Iowa meat packer convicted of 'ID theft'

Continued from front page

ing by the judge, she indicated that she had strong "opinions" about immigration. Along with another juror who expressed sympathy for immigrants, she was excluded from the pool. Many of the jurors who made the final cut are supervisors in other companies or business owners. Others have relatives who are cops.

According to Michael Said, attorney for the three workers, Andrade, González, and Núñez were the only ones of 30 Swift workers from the Marshalltown plant charged with "identity theft" who refused to plead guilty and accept deals proposed by the prosecutor. Said stated that Andrade will appeal her conviction.

"There is no justice here," said Renato González, 38, Norma González's brother. "When I first came to this country I thought the laws, the constitution, were beautiful. But now I see they are just pieces of paper."

The three women, meat packers at the Marshalltown Swift pork slaughterhouse, were arrested in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid December 12. ICE agents rounded up and threw in jail that day 97 workers in the

Iowa plant, and nearly 1,300 in all six Swift plants raided—including in Colorado, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, and Utah—of whom half have been deported and nearly 300 have been charged with felonies related to "identity theft."

During the May 1 trial here, the prosecutor, Assistant U.S. Attorney Lester Pott, called Swift managers as witnesses, who claimed they had no idea that any of the workers at Swift were undocumented; an ICE agent; and a Social Security criminal investigator. González's "crime" was using documents with another person's name to get a job. González said in her testimony that she needed the job to help support her ill mother.

Renato González said he and his mother are permanent residents and applied years ago to obtain a resident visa for his sister. Norma González was on a waiting list for a work permit and residency.

Renato also testified that Swift knew that many of its employees used different names and were not "documented."

"How many Swift workers are using false identities?" Pott asked in his cross examination, demanding names. Renato González refused to provide that information. "That's not my job," he said.

Echoing the judges' instructions, Pott told jurors in his closing statement to

show no sympathy for González. It doesn't matter she paid taxes and never received tax refunds. It doesn't matter if she is a nice person or a hard worker. The only thing that matters, he said, is she used a false name and Social Security number for a job she is not "entitled" to.

Said explained that since December 12 Andrade, González, and Núñez have been held in jail. The courts have refused to allow them out on bail.

The first day of the trial Norma González had only three supporters in the courtroom, including this reporter. The second day, after her brother and others made some calls, 11 came to show their solidarity, including five meat packers at Swift and a rail worker.

## 'Militant' subs

Continued from front page

*Militant*, and many books and pamphlets," reported Tom Fiske, a packinghouse worker in St. Paul, Minnesota. "Someone we met at the May 1 demonstration joined us in selling the paper."

That can be multiplied everywhere. With three weeks left in the subscription drive, and many areas ahead of schedule, *Militant* supporters in a number of areas are increasing their quotas—as Chicago; Newark, New Jersey; and Seattle did last week—and more are encouraged to do so. On to surpassing the goal of 2,400!

## 'Militant' fund

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

May 9—*Militant* supporters sent in \$11,000 for the paper's \$100,000 fund drive last week. That puts the eight-week effort about \$5,500 behind schedule.

In San Francisco and Newark, New Jersey, supporters of the paper increased their quotas. This is a much-needed initiative since local pledges are still about \$3,000 short of the international goal.

The boost to the paper's circulation during and after the May Day actions increases opportunities to get donations from workers, students, and others who like the paper's accurate coverage and socialist editorial policy. Send your donation to the address on page 2.

## \$100,000 'Militant' Fund Drive

March 31–May 27 ♦ Week 5 of 8

Country	Quota	Paid	%
AUSTRALIA	1,400	1,235	88%
FRANCE	300	260	87%
CANADA	3,500	2,321	66%
UNITED STATES			
New York	14,000	10,160	73%
Miami*	3,800	2,750	72%
San Francisco*	11,000	7,689	70%
Chicago*	5,700	3,955	69%
Atlanta	6,000	3,895	65%
Twin Cities	5,000	3,214	64%
Pittsburgh	3,000	1,820	61%
Newark, NJ*	3,850	2,300	60%
Philadelphia*	4,300	2,400	56%
Des Moines	2,000	1,026	51%
Birmingham, AL	2,500	1,245	50%
Washington, D.C.	3,000	1,449	48%
Boston	3,800	1,730	46%
Seattle	7,000	3,086	44%
Houston	3,000	1,245	42%
San Diego	500	150	30%
Los Angeles	8,000	2,320	29%
Detroit	65	0	0%
Albany, NY	50	0	0%
Other		300	
U.S. total	86,565	50,734	59%
NEW ZEALAND	2,800	1,602	57%
SWEDEN	500	220	44%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	1,500	435	29%
Edinburgh	400	215	54%
UK total	1,900	650	34%
ICELAND	450	0	0%
Intl'l totals	97,115	57,022	57%
Goal/Should be	100,000	62,500	63%
* increased quota			

## —ON THE PICKET LINE—

### Construction workers in Sweden strike, win national contract

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—Construction workers in Sweden reached an agreement April 24 on a new national contract after calling a national strike six days earlier in response to a proposed pact that did not meet their demands.

"The most important issue is the right for the union to negotiate," said Fredrik Gehlin, a construction worker picketing outside his workplace in Hammarby in south Stockholm on April 20. "We also want a higher basic wage," he said.

The workers receive a part of their wages based on their productivity. They don't receive that pay until after three months. Under the new pact, the basic rate will be raised from 112 to 128 Swedish Kronor (1 SEK = U.S. 15 cents) during the three years of the contract. The new contract also preserves the right of union locals to negotiate rates on bigger construction projects of more than 1,200 hours.

—Catharina Tirsén

### Workers at New Zealand plant push back concession demands

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Workers at Amcor, a packaging company here, claimed a victory and returned to work May 4 after a two-and-a-half day lockout.

The workers established a 24-hour picket on May 1. More than 60 members of the Engineering Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) were involved. Ten Amcor workers also joined some 200 unionists and young people marching in central Auckland to mark May Day.

Pickets told the *Militant* on May 2 that the lockout followed their refusal to accept the company's demand for concessions in their site agreement.

A key issue was the drive by the bosses' to cut manning levels on machines producing plastic bags, said shop steward Greg Watts. Currently each machine has three staff, he explained—one machine operator, one materials person, and a team leader. The reduced manning proposed by the company would put the

### 40,000 in Sydney protest antiunion laws



Militant/Bob Aiken

SYDNEY, Australia, April 22—Some 40,000 people marched here today to oppose antiunion "Work Choices" laws. It was one of several actions in major cities across Australia organized by the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

—BOB AIKEN

safety of workers at risk, he said.

The workers voted unanimously to accept a deal which "consisted of appropriate staffing levels without redundancies, an extra week's service and shift

leave, an industry standard pay rise and a day's pay to compensate for some of the lockout time" said an EPMU media release.

—Annalucia Vermunt

## May Day mobilizations show

### Continued from front page

Militant reports on page 7, actions took place in 101 cities and towns in 30 states plus Washington, D.C., and there were certainly more. The largest were those of 150,000 in Chicago, 60,000 in Milwaukee, 35,000 in Los Angeles, and 15,000 in Phoenix and Detroit. Ten thousand rallied in Yakima, a city of 71,000 in the agricultural region of central Washington.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

A job action by thousands of truck drivers, most of them Mexican or Central American, cut traffic in half at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles—the nation's largest container port complex. Thousands of other workers across the country took the day off.

The big-business media and rally organizers claimed the actions were smaller than last year because the "fear of raids kept many illegal immigrants from coming out," as an Associated Press report asserted.

Protests against the stepped-up raids and deportations, however, were a major focus of this year's demonstrations. In some instances, the factory sweeps and raids in working-class communities made workers even angrier.

In Chicago, for example, an April 25 raid by heavily armed FBI and ICE agents in the predominantly Mexican neighborhood of Little Village, also known as La Villita, sparked widespread outrage among workers. As a result, working people turned out for the May Day rally in higher numbers than had been projected by organizers and the media.

Over the past months, some of the factory sweeps have been met with immediate protests. When ICE agents raided six Swift meatpacking plants across the country December 12, arresting nearly 1,300 workers, they were met by hundreds of protesting relatives and others in towns such as Greeley, Colorado, and Marshalltown, Iowa. In New Bedford, Massachusetts, a March 6 raid and mass arrests of foreign-born workers at a leather factory sparked a protest rally of 700.

The high-profile raids certainly did intimidate some immigrants—that was their purpose. ICE reports that in fiscal year 2006 it deported more than

186,000 people, a 10 percent increase over the year before.

But fear over the raids was not the main reason the May Day rallies brought out 400,000 people compared to 2 million in 2006.

Last year the scope of the massive working-class outpouring caught the U.S. capitalist rulers by surprise. Since then, they have been working hard to push back the increased confidence and combativity of foreign-born workers. They have been working overtime to get protesters off the streets and into relying on capitalist politicians and institutions.

In May 2006, Democratic Party politicians and their supporters were unable to prevent a massive immigrant rights mobilization, precipitated by widespread anger at the House passage of the Sensenbrenner bill, which would have made it a felony to live in the United States without proper papers. Instead, these liberal forces jumped on the bandwagon and took part in the May 1 actions, seeking to tone down their militancy and diffuse their purpose.

This time liberals sought to demobilize the struggle by arguing that the

## U.S. working class is stronger

situation had changed since last year. The movement has "matured" and must shift from street actions to the Congressional arena. Now we must look to the new Democratic majority in Congress to deliver favorable legislation, they insisted. Don't march on May 1—lobby your congressman, workers were told by priests, politicians, and other "friends."

Major forces in the various immigrant rights organizations followed this pro-Democratic line. They refused to organize demonstrations or scaled back plans for public actions. Some argued that the priority must be to approve the bipartisan Flake-Gutiérrez "immigration reform" bill, falsely presenting it as progress toward the legalization of undocumented workers. As a result, as an AP article noted, this led to "a concerted effort by many groups to focus on citizenship and voter registration drives instead of street mobilizations."

Despite these efforts, large numbers of workers did turn out on May Day. That is because of the deep-going impact that the influx of millions from abroad has on the working class,

helping break down divisions within the class, reinforcing solidarity, and widening the cultural scope of working people as a whole. The resistance by the foreign-born has had an impact on the political consciousness of native-born workers, while many immigrants themselves have broadened their political experiences as part of the U.S. working class.

Immigrant workers have helped reconquer May Day as a labor celebration in the United States. The long-term strengthening of the working class will be registered at future May Day actions and in the ongoing struggles to oppose deportations and demand legal status for all workers.

The exemplary actions by these fighters in the front ranks of the working class are the biggest obstacle to the ability of the U.S. ruling class to pursue its plunder of land and labor worldwide. For the trade unions, whose membership continues to decline, this struggle is a life-and-death question. Joining these working-class battles provides the best chance for revitalizing the U.S. labor movement.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 21, 1982

With increased U.S. support, the British government has moved to expand its war against Argentina.

Meanwhile, Cuba and other targets of imperialist aggression have acted to deepen their solidarity with Argentina.

On May 10 it was reported that in his capacity as chairman of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, Fidel Castro had called on the member nations of that body to help halt "imminent Anglo-American aggression" against Argentina.

Three days earlier, the British government had announced the expansion of its naval and air blockade to within 12 miles of the mainland Argentine coast. It warned that ships leaving their ports, or planes leaving their bases, faced attack.



May 20, 1957

After three years of struggle against the Jim Crow advocates of Louisville, Ky., and their witch-hunting tactics, Andrew Wade IV has won title to his home. Repair of the house damaged in 1954 by racist bombers will proceed immediately.

The house was dynamited, but Wade continued his fight against segregation. His friends including the white couple, Carl and Anne Braden in whose name the house was originally purchased, were arrested on "conspiracy" charges and imprisoned. But Wade and his friends fought on. Finally, the bank holding the mortgage on the house foreclosed on a technicality, sure that Wade would be unable to meet the sum. This last attempt to save Jim Crow was foiled when a Chicago couple, Mr. and Mrs. David Simonson, learned of the new threat and advanced the Wade family a loan.



May 14, 1932

Last Friday witnessed another manifestation of Capitalist democracy in this land of the free and home of the brave. In one of the suburbs of Chicago, in Melrose Park, the brave defenders of law and order opened up a volley of machine gun fire on a meeting of unarmed, defenseless unemployed workers who had gathered to protest against police brutality and to demand the elementary right of free speech of demonstrating in common against the ravages of the capitalist economic order which has reduced some twelve million toilers to starvation in the United States alone.

Nine workers were wounded, three of them seriously. The shooting took place with the approval and under the command of the local authorities of Melrose Park.

# 'New winds in U.S. class struggle kindle interest in Cuba'

## Bay Area event promotes book by Chinese Cuban generals in Cuban Revolution

BY LEA SHERMAN  
AND BETSEY STONE

BERKELEY, California, May 2—Eighty-five students, faculty, and others gathered at the Martin Luther King Jr. Student Union of the University of California here today for a panel discussion of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. The book is published by Pathfinder Press.

Jere Takahashi, Director of Multicultural Student Development, and Lupe Gallegos-Díaz, Director of Chicano/Latino Development, welcomed people to the meeting and thanked the sponsors for organizing the event. Sponsors included Multicultural Student Development, Chicano/Latino Studies, Asian American Studies, African American Studies, Center for Chinese Studies, Ethnic Studies, Pathfinder Books, and Eastwind Books of Berkeley.

Harvey Dong, professor of Asian American Studies and owner of Eastwind Books, chaired the meeting and introduced the panelists.

Loni Ding, award-winning filmmaker and lecturer in Asian American Studies, presented an excerpt of her film *Ancestors in the Americas: Coolies, Settlers and Sailors*. The documentary tells the story of Chinese immigration to Cuba beginning in 1847, when large numbers of Chinese were taken by the Spanish colonialists to work as contract labor on sugar plantations and other jobs in Cuba, supplementing the declining supply of African slaves.

The film describes the resistance of Chinese Cubans to the inhuman conditions they faced in Cuba, including their participation in the Cuban wars for independence from Spain.

Alex Saragoza, associate professor in Ethnic Studies and Chicano/Latino Studies, highlighted the chapter of *Our History Is Still Being Written* on the participation of Cuban volunteers in struggles for national liberation in Africa, particularly Angola, where Cuban troops joined the struggle between 1975 and 1988 to fight repeated invasions of the country by the South African apartheid army aimed at thwarting Angola's recently won independence from Portuguese colonial rule.

"The South African forces and their allies were defeated in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale, forcing them to retreat along with their Angolan and CIA supported units," Saragoza said. "It was one of Cuba's finest hours in their long history of support of Africa's struggle for national liberation."

Miriam Solis, a UC Berkeley student in the departments of Geography and Ethnic Studies, said she appreciated Gen. Moisés Sío Wong's role in helping to initiate Cuba's system of urban food gardens, known as *organopónicos*. These were launched during the food crisis of the

early 1990s, following the abrupt end of aid and trade in preferential terms with the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries. Sío Wong is one of the three Chinese Cuban generals interviewed in the book.

Wesley Ueunten, a lecturer in Asian American Studies, spoke about the human solidarity he witnessed in Cuba when he visited the country last winter with Tsukimi Kai, a Japanese American organization. Ueunten, a Hawaiian of Okinawan descent, pointed to the importance of the book in dispelling the image of Asians as passive victims of exploitation, and showing that making a revolution is possible.

The event was held the day after the May Day mobilizations for immigrant rights across the country. In her remarks, Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of the book, took note of the fact that many of those in attendance had participated in these actions the day before.

Of all the books Pathfinder has published on the Cuban Revolution, Waters said, the book of interviews with the three Chinese Cuban generals has attracted the broadest interest. This partly stems from the desire to learn about the history of the Chinese in Cuba and else-



Militant/Hank Scheer

About 85 students, faculty, and others attended May 2 meeting on *Our History Is Still Being Written* at University of California Berkeley campus. Panelists (from left): Loni Ding, Miriam Solis, Mary-Alice Waters, Wesley Ueunten, Alex Saragoza, and Harvey Dong.

where in Latin America, something that is not well known. "But it also has to do with the new winds that are blowing and the new struggles that are developing," she noted.

"This is related to the growing pride, confidence, and resistance of Asians and other immigrants in the United States in the kind of struggles we are seeing more and more around us every day," she said, "that we saw another demonstration of yesterday."

After the program, a delicious spread of refreshments, provided by the sponsors, was served, and many stayed to

continue discussion informally. People studied displays on the book and browsed the literature tables of Eastwind Books of Berkeley and Pathfinder Books.

The program was taped by a reporter for APEX Express: Asian Pacific Islander Expressions, a program on the Pacifica radio station KPFA 94.1 FM in Berkeley. Excerpts of it are to be aired on May 10 at 7:00 p.m. Pacific time, and they can be heard online at [www.kpfa.org](http://www.kpfa.org).

*The Berkeley Daily Planet* ran a review of the book in its April 17–19 issue, headlined, "Chinese Cuban Revolutionaries Still Lead Cuba."

## Cuban authorities foil attempted hijacking in Havana

BY RÓGER CALERO

HAVANA—Cuban authorities aided by at least one hostage foiled a May 3 attempt to hijack a civilian plane here and commandeer it to the United States.

The hijackers were two army draftees who had deserted from a military base near the José Martí International Airport here four days earlier, after killing a young soldier on sentry duty and stealing two AK-47 assault rifles.

The two deserters reportedly took over a bus with several passengers—including Lt. Col. Víctor Acuña, 41, of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR)—and used it to ram through an airport gate. They then entered an empty plane parked on the tarmac, forcing the passengers of the bus onto the aircraft, and demanded to leave for the United States.

Inside the plane, the hijackers killed Acuña when he attempted to disarm them.

Cuba's Ministry of the Interior issued a statement the day after the attack, blaming the hijacking on U.S. government policies that encourage such criminal acts by refusing to send the perpetrators back to Cuba or to prosecute them in the United States (see statement printed this page).

More than a dozen Cubans have been injured and two killed in nine hijacking attempts on the island since 1987.

The statement also condemned a U.S. district court judge's recent release on bail of the CIA-trained murderer Luis Posada Carriles, pointing out that such measures encourage criminal acts like the May 3 hijacking attempt. Carriles was involved in the 1976 midair bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people and has admitted to organizing a 1997 bombing campaign against Cuba.

The Cuban statement denounced the Cuban Adjustment Act as well. Approved by U.S. Congress in 1966, the

law encourages people to leave Cuba for the United States by providing virtually automatic asylum to any Cuban who reaches U.S. shores, regardless of crimes they may have committed to get there, and by offering them expedited permanent residency.

According to the May 5 issue of the Cuban daily *Juventud Rebelde*, thousands attended a ceremony in Pinar del

Río, where Acuña was buried. Participants paid tribute to him as a revolutionary combatant and denounced the attempted hijacking.

At the event, the FAR posthumously awarded Acuña the Antonio Maceo Medal of Honor, on the request of Raúl Castro, Cuba's acting president and minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces.

## Cuban gov't statement on hijacking attempt

*Below is the statement Cuba's Ministry of the Interior issued the day after a failed attempt to hijack a civilian aircraft and fly it to the United States. The statement was published in the May 4 issue of the Cuban English-language weekly Granma International.*

In the early morning hours of Thursday, May 3, two individuals were captured as they attempted to hijack a civilian aircraft with the aim of traveling to the United States.

To carry out their plans, these individuals hijacked a city bus, took several passengers hostage, and used the vehicle to burst into Terminal 1 (domestic flights) of the José Martí International Airport, where they boarded a parked aircraft with no crew or passengers in it. Once inside the plane, the murderers, with four shots, killed one of the hostages, FAR Lieutenant Colonel Víctor Ibo Acuña Velázquez, who, despite being unarmed, heroically tried to prevent the terrorist act from being carried out.

Effective and coordinated action by the forces of public order made it possible to thwart the hijackers' aim and save the lives of the other hostages.

The criminals arrested are the last two perpetrators remaining at large following the April 29 murder of Yoendris Gutiérrez Hernández, a young soldier of the Active Military Service who was on sentry duty. Another soldier was wounded.

The criminals arrested, who were also on Active Military Service in the same unit, fled with two AK rifles. An intensive search operation was therefore launched, and measures were taken to prevent further victims.

At all times, the authorities received the decisive support of the population of the area, which facilitated the prior arrest of another individual implicated in the acts, who confessed that their aim was to leave the country illegally.

Demonstrated once again is the criminal nature of the Cuban Adjustment Act, which encourages criminal and vandalistic acts.

The highest authorities of the United States bear responsibility for these latest crimes, which add to the long list of terrorist acts that Cuba has been the victim of over nearly half a century. The latest release of a monster of terrorism [Luis Posada Carriles] gives fresh encouragement to such acts.

**Our History  
Is Still Being  
Written**

THE STORY OF THREE  
CHINESE-CUBAN GENERALS  
IN THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

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# Roundup of May Day actions



Militant/Matilda Hernández-Miyares

## Continued from page 7

as the Flake-Gutiérrez bill.

"Well, if we reject the two proposals from Congress, what do you propose?" asked Juárez.

"Amnesty!" and "Legalization for all!" were the most popular responses.

In downtown Washington, 400 Asian Americans and their supporters turned out for an action sponsored by the Asian American Justice Center, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, and Organization of Chinese Americans.

Won Park from the Korean American Community and Service Association, based in Chicago, came with a group of 40. Park told the *Militant* he wanted legislation normalizing the situation of U.S.-born children of undocumented immigrants, who are sometimes unable to receive financial aid for college.

## Los Angeles cops

### Continued from front page

ing clubs, and firing 240 rubber bullets indiscriminately during their sweep of MacArthur Park.

Videotapes being reviewed by the National Lawyers Guild show a child about 10 years old being hit by a bullet. The black-and-blue welts these bullets left on peoples' bodies are now a familiar image. Hundreds are coming forward to tell their stories, making it clear the cops came looking for a fight and unleashed a police riot.

Estella, a member of the Committee of Workers in Resistance and a home health worker who asked that her full name not be used, described the march to the park. The cops had denied a permit to march in the street, and kept trying to force everyone onto the sidewalk.

"People started to obey, but we couldn't stay on the sidewalk because there were too many people," Estella said. The rally grew to at least 5,000. Estella said police on bicycles pushed protesters from one side of the street to the other. "They also used sirens to intimidate us and to say they were in charge."

As *Militant* reporters were driving to the park from the earlier rally of 30,000 downtown, they were passed by five patrol cars packed with four cops each, with riot helmets in the back window. This was at least an hour before any claimed disturbance.

Launching a red-baiting campaign, Police Chief Bratton blamed "agitators or the anarchists" for starting the violence.

That's not true, said Fernando Oreyana, who witnessed the start of the assault. "The police started it and then some people responded with

Continued on page 9

The National Capitol Immigration Coalition has called an immigrant rights march on the Capitol here for June 2.



### BY TOM BAUMANN

MINNEAPOLIS, May 1—More than 1,000 people mobilized for a May Day march here organized by the Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Coalition under the banners "Unconditional Legalization for All!" and "An injury to one is an injury to all!"

Many were students who at noon walked out of class and gathered at Powderhorn Park. Diana Barreto, a student



Above: Students climb fence at Hollenbeck Middle School in Los Angeles to join Roosevelt High School students marching to the May Day rally, which took place during the day. Left: Part of the 15,000 people in Detroit who rallied May 1 for legalization of immigrants.

at Edison High School, was part of a contingent of 35 students who walked out of her school.

Bella Maruro, a student at Ramsey Middle School, said, "We want an education but since we don't have a Social Security number we can't go to college."

Speakers at the rally spoke out against the recent raid in Willmar, Minnesota, where immigration police forced their way into homes and arrested 49 people (see April 30 issue).



### BY MARSHALL LAMBIE

DETROIT, May 1—"I told my boss I

wasn't going to work," said David Reyes, a landscaping worker. "We shut down the company, about 20 of us landscapers." He was one of a police-estimated 15,000 people who took to the streets here today.

"With these raids, they're pushing us to do this. We won't accept it," said Miguel Navarro, a roofer. He was referring to the step-up in immigration raids in Michigan, where ICE agents have carried out three high-profile operations since the beginning of the year.

Matilda Hernández-Miyares and Ryan Scott contributed to this article.



May 5 demonstration in Houston to condemn police attack on a May Day action in Los Angeles for legalization of immigrants.

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**MASSACHUSETTS: Boston:** 13 Bennington St., 2nd Floor, East Boston. Zip: 02128. Tel: (617) 569-9169. E-mail: swpboston@verizon.net

**MICHIGAN: Detroit:** 40 Davenport

St. Apt. 616. Zip: 48201. Tel: (248) 860-9341. E-mail: youngsocialistsdetroit@gmail.com

**MINNESOTA: Minneapolis:** 1311 1/2 E. Lake St. Zip: 55407. Tel: (612) 729-1205. E-mail: tcswp@qwest.net

**NEW JERSEY: Newark:** 168 Bloomfield Ave., 2nd Floor. Zip: 07104. Tel: (973) 481-0077. E-mail: swpnewark@optonline.net

**NEW YORK: Albany:** Tel: (518) 929-4786. E-mail: Young Socialists518@gmail.com **Manhattan:** 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 629-6649. E-mail: newyorkswp@mac.com

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### AUSTRALIA

**Sydney:** 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing

address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl\_australia@optusnet.com.au

### CANADA

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**Paris:** P.O. 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 40-10-28-37. E-mail: milpath.paris@laposte.net

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### NEW ZEALAND

**Auckland:** Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 276-8885. E-mail: clauck@xtra.co.nz

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**Stockholm:** Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: kfstockholm@tele2.se

### UNITED KINGDOM

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## EDITORIAL

# Jail L.A. cops for brutal attack

All the cops, top officers of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), and other city officials responsible for the police riot on May Day should be swiftly prosecuted and jailed.

Working people and other opponents of police brutality should promote and join the protest called for May 17 in Los Angeles to demand justice over this assault and press the demands of May Day: legal residency for all immigrants and an end to police raids and deportations. At a May 8 public hearing on the attack, attended by an overflow crowd of 200, dozens of those injured by the cops testified and many called for the firing of LAPD chief William Bratton.

A May 5 protest in Houston condemned the Los Angeles police riot. Similar actions are needed around the country.

Millions across the United States were outraged when they watched on TV how riot cops teargassed, clubbed, and fired rubber bullets at the crowd and at journalists covering the event. Many working people, especially Blacks, have been at the receiving end of the LAPD's long record of brutality—emplotted by the savage 1992 beating of Rodney King—and can readily identify with immigrant workers speaking out today. The video images of the MacArthur Park attack will “reopen old wounds, regrettably,” said Police Commission president John Mack, whose job is to whitewash the cops. The capitalist rulers have reason to be worried that incidents like this one can help spur more African Americans and others to join a struggle that is not just for the foreign-born but for all working people.

The movement to end raids and deportations and win legalization of the undocumented is not a Mexican, Central American, or Latino movement, nor is it primarily about immigration. It is a *working-class* movement. Its main goal is to improve the living and working conditions of millions of superexploited workers, for which legalization is a precondition. Achieving such a goal is

in the interests of all toilers.

The working-class mobilizations for the legalization of undocumented immigrants—including 400,000 nationwide on May Day this year and 2 million a year ago—have scared the U.S. rulers. Over the past year they have tried various means to push back this struggle, from increased factory raids, to convictions and jail time for “identity theft,” to attempts to divert the fight toward reliance on Congress. These attacks have targeted workers involved in the struggle for legalization and other resistance to the bosses’ antilabor offensive.

The goal of the U.S. capitalists is not to drive out most of the undocumented. To the contrary, the bosses draw millions from around the world into their factories and fields because they need them as a source of superexploited labor.

The purpose of immigration laws and police is to maintain such a pariah layer, at best as “guest workers.”

At the same time, the massive influx from abroad strengthens the ranks of the capitalists’ own gravediggers—the working class. Foreign-born workers have become more integrated into the proletariat of the United States and politics in this country.

To undercut this threat to the bosses’ interests, the government has stepped up police operations and other efforts to try to keep immigrant workers fearful, underground, segregated into their own barrios, isolated from the rest of their class. But the opposite is happening.

The example of solidarity, courage, and militancy set by workers in the battles for legalization and for an end to the raids and deportations shows how a working-class vanguard is being forged in the United States. The actions today by these workers—the biggest obstacle to the drive for exploitation and plunder by the ruling class in the most powerful imperialist country—are the most important development for workers and farmers around the world.

## L.A. police riot

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plastic bottles,” he pointed out.

The cops rapidly moved from the street into the park, where about 2,000 people were gathered in a peaceful rally that had a permit until 9 p.m. “I saw a woman with her young daughter who was hit with a club,” said Oreyana. “They knocked her down and kicked her. I saw another guy hit with a rubber bullet. They forced me up Alvarado and then over on 6th Street,” in the opposite direction from his home.

Low-flying helicopters circled overhead ordering everyone to leave—although most people couldn’t hear what they were saying. Most of the instructions were only in English.

Waves of riot police moved in from the south and east, closing down most exits from the park. The cops continued firing rubber bullets and clubbing people.

Pedro Svevcec, evening anchor for Telemundo, said cops hit him three times and pointed a riot gun at his face. He said he saw police knock over monitors and lights, as well as hit people. The station had to switch to an emergency anchor in Miami since members of its crew broadcasting live from the scene were knocked down and beaten by the cops.

Carl Stein, a KCBS cameraman, was struck in the ribs by batons as police picked him up and moved him out of their way.

Patricia Ballaz, a camerawoman for FOX-TV, is suing the city and the LAPD. She suffered a fractured wrist, an injury to her ankle, and was hit in the chest by a police club.

Los Angeles is home to an estimated 1 million undocumented immigrants. The barrio around MacArthur Park is one of the most densely populated immigrant communities. Gauntlets of police prevented many workers from entering the subway or using other means of transportation to get back to their homes.

Hector Gómez, a day laborer, was hit with a police club and one of the rubber bullets. “Who gave them the right to beat people?” he asked. “They are armed, we’re not. We came in peace to fight for our future. Who gave them the order to do this?”

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa returned to Los Angeles three days after the police riot, cutting short a trade mission to El Salvador. “Like every Angeleno I was deeply, personally troubled by the events of May 1,” he said. “Those images hit me in the gut.”

Bratton expressed “grave concern.” He apologized to the media, but not to the demonstrators. Bratton ordered 60 police officers off the street pending the results of investigations. He also demoted and reassigned Deputy Chief Cayler Carter, the highest-ranking police officer in MacArthur park during the cop riot.

These actions show that top local officials regard the police attack as a major public relations disaster for this city’s rulers and their careers. At least four investigations, including an FBI civil rights inquiry, are underway. According to today’s *Los Angeles Times*, initial inquiries have disclosed that at least 24 civilians were clubbed by the police or hit by rubber bullets—instead of 10 the cops initially claimed.

“The police action of May 1 was clearly an action to suppress our movement and instill fear,” Raúl Anorve, a rally organizer, said at the May 8 public hearing.

Maria Elena Durazo, head of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, said at the same hearing, “We are saddened that on May 1 our rights were not protected.”

A minority of speakers at the hearing, including James Gilchrist of the vigilante Minuteman Project, voiced support for the cops.

“The community demanded this,” Alvaro Huerta of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles told the *Militant*, referring to the May 17 protest march. “We must show the police we are not silenced.”

“The idea is to shift back the focus on immigration reform that was diverted by the lack of professionalism of the LAPD,” Jorge Mario Cabrera, of the Center of Central American Resources, told the Spanish-language daily *Hoy* about the May 17 march. “In addition, we want to reconquer our confidence that we can exercise our constitutional right of assembly in public places.”

In the Black community, many readily identified the cop attack for what it was: a police riot. “We know about police brutality,” said Brian Breye, a resident of Inglewood. “We remember what happened to Rodney King, how the cops take out their hostility and racism.”

## Venezuela gov’t takes control of oil fields

Continued from front page

companies are slated to continue until June 26. On May 3, Ramírez told the media that the government would not compensate foreign companies in cash. Under the law, foreign investors may stay on and operate as joint ventures as long as PDVSA has a minimum 60 percent share.

Terms of the takeover also include freezing any layoffs of wage workers and placing them under the contract for PDVSA workers.

“Venezuela is exercising its right to administer its natural resources for the benefit of the people,” Ramírez told a midnight rally of 40,000 on May Day at the José Antonio Anzoátegui Industrial Complex in the state of Anzoátegui.

Workers at the heavy crude refinery “exploded into a frenzied celebration after a New Year’s Eve-style countdown, dancing until the early dawn hours,” according to Reuters.

Last year, PDVSA took majority control of conventional oil operations. The government seized oil fields belonging to the Italian company ENI and the French Total when those companies refused to go along with the nationalization.

Since January, the Venezuelan government has taken majority control of the country’s top private power company, Electricidad de Caracas, which previously belonged to a U.S. company; the main telecommunications company CANTV, a subsidiary of U.S.-based Verizon; and U.S.-based CMS Energy Corp’s local electric company Seneca.

On May 3, Chávez said the government would nationalize Venezuelan banks and the Argentine-owned steel company Sidor if they did not begin prioritizing domestic needs. The month before, he warned cement companies that they would be nationalized if they worsened the country’s housing crisis by favoring exports over domestic sales.

of the total population in a country whose official language is Ukrainian. This is an important clarification, given the long fight of Ukrainians for self-determination and language rights, which was supported by the Bolsheviks and reversed under Stalinist rule.

*Marc Lichtman  
Brooklyn, New York*

lawful protest” including those “that interfere in any way with commercial or non-commercial traffic on public or private roads, airports, railways, or waterways. A trial date has not been set.

*John Steele  
Toronto, Ontario*

### Ukraine

A phrase in the article “Power struggle sharpens among bureaucratic rulers in Ukraine” in the May 14 *Militant* can be misleading. The phrase, “Ukraine, with its 10 million Russian-speaking population,” is correct for the number of Russian speakers there and relevant to the article. But this represents around 22%

**The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.**

## LETTERS

### Mohawk leader arrested

As a follow up to the article “Natives in Canada barricade railway in fight for land” in the May 14 *Militant*, I want to inform *Militant* readers that Shawn Brant, the spokesperson for the action, is now facing criminal charges. He appeared in an Ontario courtroom May 3 in shackles after handing himself over to the provincial police. The charges—disobeying a court order, mischief, and breach of recognizance—violate an immunity agreement between the protesters and the cops when the Mohawks peacefully ended the blockade. The court granted him bail on condition that he not “plan, incite, initiate, encourage or participate in any un-